

Invisible Disabilities and Effective Accommodations



October 2016

Today's Objectives...

- Increase your confidence in communicating these learning differences to other educators
- Increase understanding of the importance of providing accommodations within the classroom
- Increase confidence in identifying effective accommodations that are specific to the student's individual needs and communicating the importance of these supports with teachers

Invisible Disability



- Symptoms such as debilitating pain, fatigue, dizziness, cognitive dysfunctions, brain injuries, learning differences and mental health disorders as well as hearing and vision impairments which are not always obvious to the onlooker, but can sometimes or always limit daily activities.

Invisible Disability

This could include:

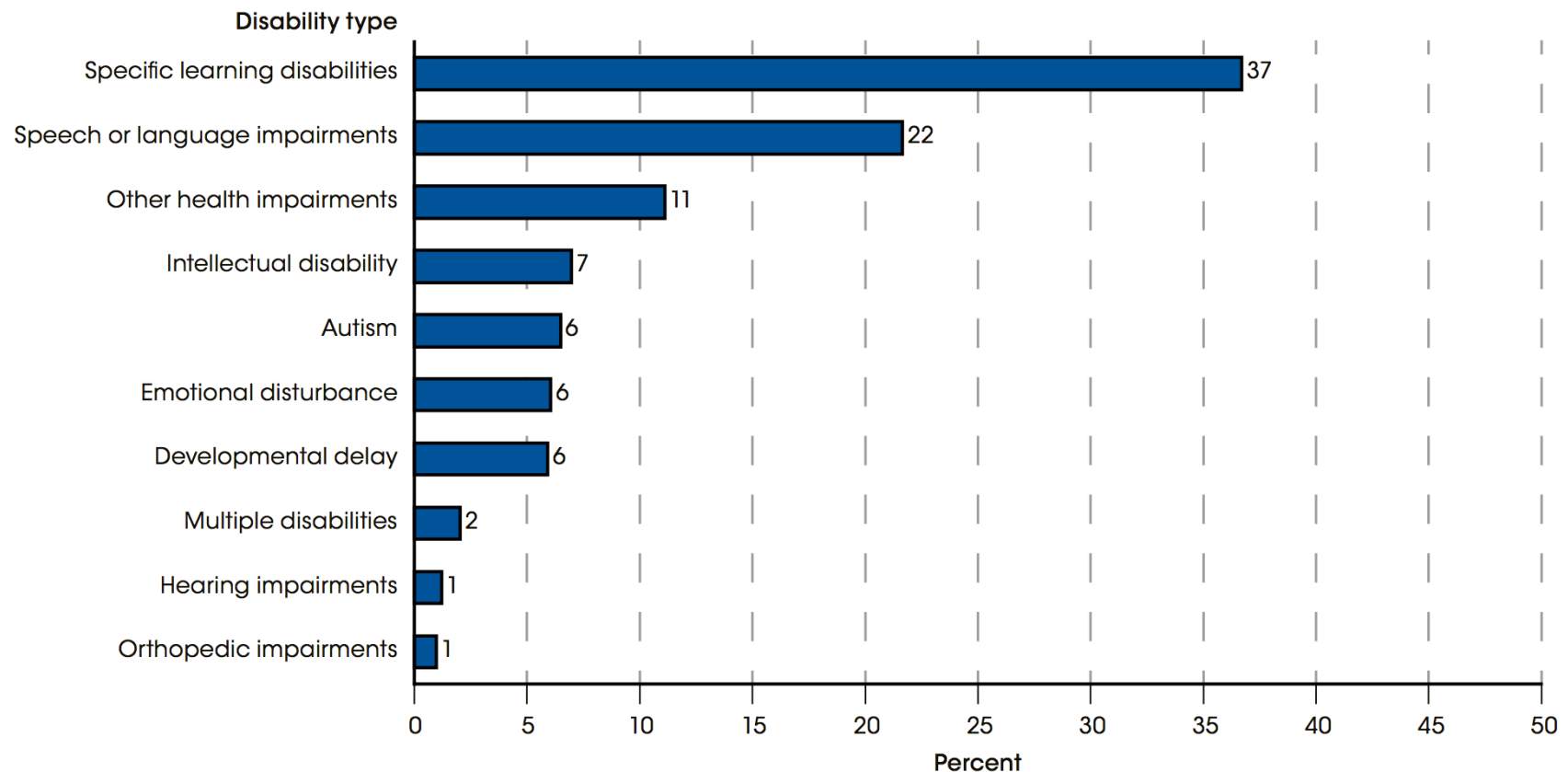
- Learning Disability
- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder
- Emotional Disturbance
- Vision and/or Hearing Impairment(s)
- Autism
- Brain Injury...and more

Consider This...



Children and Youth with Disabilities

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of children ages 3-21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by disability type: School year 2010-11



NOTE: Deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairments are not shown because they each account for less than 1 percent of children served under IDEA. Due to categories not shown, detail does not sum to total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) database, retrieved from https://www.ideadata.org/DACAnalyticTool/Intro_2.asp. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 48.

Understanding

We must try to understand our student's struggles...



Empathy Stations

- Work with partners to work through each Empathy Station
- You will have 10 minutes to complete each station
- Record your answers on the appropriate paper at each station
- Make sure to complete at least 4 stations
 - Reading, Math, and Attention
- Once you have completed the station respond to one question on the poster paper. If it is not your first station, respond to another's response as well.

Empathy Stations Wrap-up

- Did the simulations help you to better understand a disability within that area?
- Were there specific supports that you would have benefited from when trying to complete each task?



The Importance of Accommodations within the Classroom

Individualized Education Program

In developing each student's IEP, the team must consider:

1. The strengths of the student;
2. The concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child;
3. The results of the most recent evaluation; and
4. The academic achievement, developmental, and functional needs of the student.

Mason

Strengths

Mason is a fourth grade student. His classroom teacher reports that he diligently works to complete reading assignments in class. Mason is able to sound out words within grade-level text. He has a strong understanding of letter-to-sound relationships.

Parental Concerns

Mason's dad reports that Mason enjoys reading books on sports. He reports that homework takes Mason a very long time to complete due to his slow reading.

Disability Impact

Mason's learning disability in reading fluency adversely impacts his ability to participate in grade level curriculum in all academic areas.

Mason

Student Needs

Mason needs to increase his automaticity in reading words within grade-level passages. He needs to increase his visual awareness of words without relying on the phonological properties or sounding each word out as he reads.

Baseline

Given a 4th grade level reading passage, Mason currently reads 33 correct words per minute.

Annual Goal

Given a 4th grade level reading passage, Mason will read 70 correct words per minute as measured by weekly reading fluency probes.

Least Restrictive Environment

An appropriate balance of settings and services to meet the student's individual needs.

These services are based on the student's unique needs that result from his or her disability.



Least Restrictive Environment

- Appropriate LRE is one that enables the student to make reasonable gains toward goals identified within the IEP while being educated with peers who are nondisabled to the maximum extent appropriate.

Least Restrictive Environment

- A student must not be removed from the general education setting solely because of needed accommodations and/or adaptations within the general education setting.



Mason's Least Restrictive Environment

Mason spends more than 80% of his school day within the general education classroom.

His IEP team has determined that it is appropriate for Mason to participate in all general education content areas as well as receive specialized reading instruction within the resource room 30 minutes daily.

Individualized Education Program

- Accommodations and/or adaptations needed to ensure the student's academic progress must be included within the IEP.
- This includes accommodations and/or adaptations required in physical education, vocational education, and statewide or district wide assessments.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes in the curriculum, instruction, or testing format or procedures that enable students with disabilities to participate in a way that allows them to demonstrate their ability rather than disability.

An accommodation does NOT alter the requirements.

Accommodation Examples

- Pencil grips
- Note takers
- Computers with spell check
- Text read aloud
- Shortened assignments
- Braille
- Large print

Adaptations

Adaptations are changes in educational expectations for the student with a disability compared to peers without disabilities.

Adaptations fundamentally alter requirements and provide non-comparable results.

Adaptation Examples

- Reading a reading portion of a test
- Using spell/grammar check for Language Arts assessment
- Substituting out-of-level testing
- Taking away the time requirement on a timed assessment

Identifying Effective Accommodations

How do we level the playing field?



Questions to Consider

- What are the student's strengths identified within the area(s)?
- What is the objective or requirement that the student is expected to meet?
- Identify the barrier(s) for the student in meeting that requirement.

Mason

Mason's IEP team has noted that he is able to sound words out, showing a strong understanding of letter sound relationships.

Mason's slow reading speed creates a barrier for him in meeting this requirement. His IEP team has noted that it takes Mason 3 times longer than his peers to complete an activity requiring reading.

Within the 4th grade curriculum, Mason is expected to independently read within each content area (Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies)

Questions to Consider

- What supports implemented or changes made would allow the student to access their education?
- Do these changes follow the thread of information found within the most recent evaluation results?

Mason

Providing text in all academic areas in the form of an audiobook when possible. If not possible, reading the text or content aloud to Mason.

Extended time to complete assignments and assessments that require Mason to read passages or grade-level text.

Mason's current eligibility document indicates that he has low processing speed, impacting his ability to fluently and automatically perform cognitive tasks. This impacts his automaticity in reading.

Activity



- As a team, review the scenario.
- Each scenario includes a brief description of the student, a PLAAFP and goal, information from the student's current eligibility report, and a guidance document from the Idaho Special Education Manual, *Cognitive Functioning and Psychological Processing*.
- Using the information and tools provided, identify three accommodations that will be appropriate to meet the student's individual needs.

Collaboration: Between Special Education and General Education

Advocacy

We must become good sales people of accommodations, advocating for our students' needs within the school environment.

We also need to encourage our students to become advocates for their own needs.

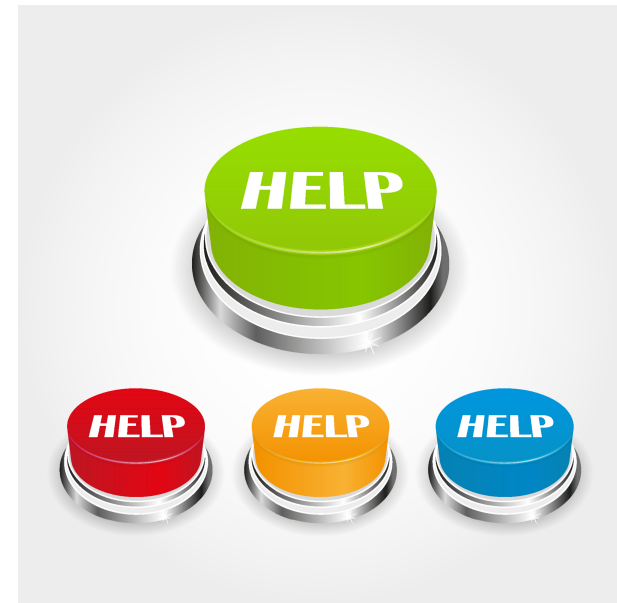


Communication

- Establish a need for the accommodation, then communicating that need with staff
- Provide a description of the accommodation within that specific setting
- Give examples of how to implement the accommodation and/or support

Assistance

- Check-in with general education teacher to verify the accommodation(s) are available regularly to the student
- Make sure the general education teacher is implementing the accommodation as intended by the IEP team
- Be available to answer any questions or trouble-shoot with the general education teacher as needed



Tools

www.idahotc.com

IdahoSESTA Resources

Idaho SESTA Training

CEC Presentations





Idaho
SESTA
Special Education Support &
Technical Assistance

Nichole Kristensen
Instructional Coordinator

Dawn Spurlock
Instructional Coordinator



www.IdahoSESTA.org



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SHERRI YBARRA, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

